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ABSTRACT

As part of an ongoing three-year investigation into the effects of declining enrollment and reduction in force (RIF) on teachers, this paper explores: (1) teacher acceptance of exclusive administrative control over performance evaluations, and (2) teacher preferences for colleague input into the evaluation process. A sample of 85 schools was drawn from 16 Massachusetts school districts, half of which had experienced enrollment declines; the other half served as a control group. The analysis is based on the responses of 1,045 teachers, 38 percent of those eligible. Administrators who regularly visit classrooms and discuss work-related questions received more acceptance of their evaluative role. Percent of male teachers was inversely related to contact with supervision, a factor that is confounded by grade level and sex of the administrator. Senior staff are more accepting of administrative authority and less enthusiastic about peer input. When joint teaching is a factor, teachers show signs of acceptance of peer judgments and less acceptance of administrative evaluations. While only 33 percent of the respondents said colleague evaluations should be very important or essential, in RIF decisions 54 percent would agree to peer observation of, and reports on, their teaching. (MLF)

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Staff Reductions and Performance

Evaluations: Teacher Views on the Roles of Administrators and Colleagues

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Abstract

The paper explores the potential effects of declining enrollment and reductions in staff on teacher orientations toward performance evaluations. Drawing on a modified bureaucratic model of organization and governance, I hypothesize that staff acceptance of administrative control over evaluations will be contingent upon their contact with supervisors. A more participatory model suggests that teacher preferences for colleague input into the evaluation process will grow, particularly in the collaborative settings of team teaching. The analysis is based on recent survey data from teachers at 85 elementary and secondary schools in 16 Eastern Massachusetts districts. The results support the importance of frequent administrative contact for staff acceptance of administrative control. The evidence on team teaching and preference for peer input is less convincing. Significant differences by age, seniority and sex are also identified.

Introduction

As long as declining pupil enrollments are not too precipitous school officials usually rely upon normal attrition, e.g. retirements and resignations, to reduce staff. If necessary, a few non-tenured teachers may be released. However, when enrollments drop by 30 to 50% over ten or more years and nearly all staff members hold tenure, then school administrators must decide: "Who stays? Who goes? On what bases?" Should the more senior teachers be kept while younger, energetic but less experienced colleagues are laid off? Or should other criteria, particularly performance evaluations, be considered? How will teachers, particularly in their colleague relationships, respond to the process of involuntary RIFing, i.e. reductions in force?

These questions are being addressed in an ongoing three year investigation into the effects of declining enrollments and RIF on teachers. In this paper I will explore two possible responses to the retrenchment of personnel. If evaluations are being used in staff reduction decisions, teachers will acknowledge administrative assessments of performance provided that they have had continuous, direct feedback from a principal or department head. Otherwise I shall hypothesize they will seek colleague input into the evaluation process. This latter response will also be contingent upon organizational factors, specifically the visibility of one's teaching to peers.

Two major factors guide the paper's hypotheses. First, as pupil enrollments decline and voters approve tax cutting referenda, such as

Proposition 2½ in Massachusetts, the retrenchment of even tenured personnel likely will occur in many school districts. Second, competency-based criteria will continue to be a factor in at least some RIF decisions. The latter point is important because several educators contend that school contracts with multiple RIF criteria will not be followed in the final analysis. Rather, seniority or years of service will vitiate other considerations. As Susan Johnson (1982:18-19) succinctly states this case:

Each of these multiple criteria provisions oblige management to prove that some factor other than seniority should govern. School officials must be prepared to demonstrate before an arbitrator that there are "substantial" differences in two teachers' qualifications and performance, that two teachers are "relatively" unequal in ability and qualifications, that a senior teacher's two unfavorable ratings were procedurally correct, or that a senior teacher is not sufficiently qualified to assume a position. Because such judgments and distinctions are difficult to prove, many districts never initiate them, relying instead on the seniority standard to make choices.

My research (Phelan, 1982, 1983) at least partially challenges that point of view. True, some superintendents and school boards relied upon seniority because they were worried about costly litigation over "measures" of performance. But others did not discount supervisory reports. Moreover, I have found that the majority of administrators and teachers will accept a comprehensive, adequately supervised, fairly administered system of performance assessments. A number of school districts are trying to implement such a system. Despite past shortcomings, these districts will continue in 1983 to apply performance evaluations to RIF decisions.

Theoretical Background

Organizational Factors

The paper's major hypotheses are derived from two models of school organization and governance. First, a modified bureaucratic model places teachers in a subservient role to administrators while, at the same time, giving them some autonomy in their classroom. Drawing on Max Weber (1958), Charles Bidwell (1965) describes the functional division of labor and hierarchical ordering of roles in school systems. On the one hand, the public holds administrators ultimately responsible for establishing standards of competency and insuring minimum levels of student accomplishment. On the other hand the "structural looseness" of school systems means that "the teacher works alone within the classroom, relatively hidden from colleagues and supervisors, so that he has broad discretionary jurisdiction within the boundaries of the classroom" (Bidwell, 1965: 976). Similarly, schools are somewhat self-contained units with principals and teachers implementing curricula and teaching methods apart from the watchful eyes of central administrators.

As an ideal type the bureaucratic model stipulates lines of authority from superintendent to instructional personnel. In practice the autonomy of teachers and schools means that a negotiated order of management prevails. Unless internal dissensions dominate role relationships, a mutual understanding of, if not agreement on, rights and responsibilities will emerge among all parties. As part of this understanding teachers expect a principal to "back them up" in classroom discipline or parental interference (Becker, 1953; Lortie, 1975). In exchange for this support, they are more likely to accept their superior's directives.

Even in an era of collective bargaining this type of reciprocal role-relationship is present in many schools (Johnson, 1981).

The use of performance evaluations for staff reductions has the potential of undermining a principal's authority. Such evaluations traditionally have been prescriptive and generally non-punitive. Written comments tend to stress positive qualities and competencies. If a principal or department head is expected to make discriminating assessments which will be included in layoff decisions, then controversies over interpretations are likely. This is particularly true if such assessments and interpretations arise from one or two classroom observations.

Research and practice indicate that supervisors rarely observe instructional staff (Lortie, 1977). Perhaps they do not want to intrude upon the normal flow of classroom interaction. Or, other pressing responsibilities divert them from instructional supervision. Ironically, staff members often want greater contact with their administrative supervisors (Corwin, 1970; Dornbusch and Scott, 1975; Gross and Herriott, 1965). As Corwin (1970:135) points out, teachers "object to being evaluated without being observed because they consider irrelevant any evaluation criteria not based on their performance in the classroom."

The frequency and quality of a supervisor's communication with individual staff members are important intervening variables in the study's design. If a principal or department head regularly drops into classrooms and, on other occasions, offers constructive suggestions for professional pedagogical growth, teachers are more likely to accept administrative judgments about performance. In effect, this response conforms to the reciprocal role strategies of a modified bureaucratic model of governance.

If schools are missing the active involvement of supervisors in the instructional process, I have hypothesized teachers will want peers to be involved in the evaluation process.

Even before declining enrollment and staff reductions became such issues, several educators had proposed a collegial model of school organization and governance. I will briefly discuss this literature as it pertains to the paper's major hypotheses.

Disturbed by the general lack of collegueship among teachers, some scholars have advanced a democratic participatory model of school organization and governance (Duke, Showers, and Imber, 1980; Moeller and Mahan, 1971; Tumin, 1977). They argue the classroom provides teachers with a unique understanding of, and insight into, pupil needs. Consequently these practitioners should be involved in school decision making. But what role should teachers have in performance evaluations?

Starting with a school faculty organized as teams, Moeller and Mahan (1971:94) propose:

The actual assessment of individual teacher performance may be delegated by the faculty team to specific members of the faculty—perhaps teachers with outstanding records of performance—or to the principal, when he has a particular competence in teaching. The important point in all this is that no person—principal, supervisor or teacher—should evaluate teachers simply because of hierarchical rank. Evaluation must be carried out by someone who has the required skills for assessing teacher performance, diagnosing its deficiencies, and providing effective alternatives for the improvement of teaching.

While supporting the principle of colleague evaluations, some educators, e.g. Bruno and Nottingham (1976), want teachers' roles to be advisory and

thereby subordinate to the bureaucratic structure of authority.

Research shows that a change in school organization from self-contained classrooms, directed by solo practitioners, to a more visible collaborative setting may be necessary before peer evaluation becomes desirable or realized. Spatial isolation from colleagues is an inhibiting factor. As Robert Dreeber (1973:469) points out: "Because of their work schedules and the spatial dispersion of classrooms, teachers have so few opportunities to see each other at work and accordingly cannot either judge or be helpful on the basis of direct observation."

Team teaching, particularly in open spaces, seems to increase visibility and feedback from colleagues (Cohen, 1981). Work visibility is the critical dimension here in the acceptance of fellow teachers' evaluations as "soundly based" (Dornbusch and Scott, 1975:84). Preferences for colleague evaluation are also contingent upon work interdependence. Thus joint teaching of a lesson requires more collaboration and communication than cross grouping of pupils (Bredo, 1977).

In short, we have two models of school organization and governance suggesting differing modes of response to administrative evaluations. The modified bureaucratic model grants administrators exclusive authority in this area. However, as we have argued, it presumes an active role of principals and department heads with staff members. The participatory model envisions colleague involvement in the evaluation process. An important contingency here is the visibility of one's teaching to peers.

Individual Differences

Previous research has shown that men tend to be more militant than women (Corwin, 1970). However when professional orientations of teachers

are considered, women who support professional autonomy are just as likely as men to take militant action. With this in mind I am reluctant to posit an hypothesized difference due to sex. Yet, because some educators may feel that women will be more accepting of administrative authority, differences by sex are included in the paper's research design.

Age and teaching experience are other factors which can influence staff attitudes toward their work (Cole, 1969; Corwin, 1970; Lortie, 1975; O'Donley, 1977). Younger, less experienced tenured teachers are more inclined than their older colleagues to challenge an hierarchical structure of authority. Consequently, they probably will be less accepting of a supervisor's judgment of performance. They may also see themselves as professionals capable of peer input into staff retention decisions. For similar reasons, educational attainment could have an effect on our dependent variables.

Research Design

Data Sources

Sixteen school districts geographically spread from Northeastern Massachusetts to Cape Cod were selected in 1980 for participation in the study. At the time of their selection eight had faced enrollment drops of 10% to 37%. Such declines continued at the rate of five to seven percent a year. By October 1982, four of these school districts had lost approximately half of their peak enrollment.

Eight districts with relatively stable populations were chosen as a control group. However, as the study progressed a few of these systems began an annual drop in numbers of two to three percent. Moreover, the

1980 passage of Proposition 2½ meant that some non-declining districts were forced to release personnel. Unsettling the relative tranquility sought in the control group, these events have confounded potential interpretations of findings.

Every effort was made to construct a sample which matched changes in enrollment with variations in RIF language and socio-economic composition. To illustrate, two moderate income communities near Boston had equally sharp contraction (i.e. greater than 30% since 1970-72) in school population but differed completely in retention policies; one with a strongly worded seniority clause and the other with multiple criteria including performance. Similarly, two more affluent middle-class suburbs and one working-class city had a 25-30% decline since 1973, but placed a different emphasis on seniority: namely, the last consideration among several, one of many criteria with no priority, and the most important factor. Three other communities shared more modest enrollment declines but represented varied RIF clauses and socio-economic composition. Similar heterogeneity appeared in the "control" group.

Wherever possible within each district, four elementary schools, one middle or junior high school, and half of the high school departments were selected at random.¹ Adjusting for differences in the grade structure and distribution of schools, and the non-participation of one high school, we arrived at a 1980-81 sample of 89 schools. Six of these schools were closed before September 1981 and two more withdrew from the project. Fortunately, I was able to add four schools, leaving us with a sample of 85.

Within each unit the principal and classroom teachers were invited to participate in a series of surveys and interviews during 1980-83. Despite the strong feelings of voter rejection and job insecurity generated by Proposition 2½, 56% (N = 1,506) of the eligible teachers completed a self-administered questionnaire during the period October 1980 - February 1981.² Following a Spring of mass teacher layoffs the Fall 1981 survey was returned by only 38% (N = 1,045). However, as shown in Table 1, second year respondents seemed as representative of the population as the first wave. The most significant difference, tenure, shows the aging of the teacher population. Additional data from 1981 revealed a median length of service to a school district of 10.5 years and of total teaching experience of 11.7 years.

Table 1

Major Characteristics of 1980
and 1981 Samples

Characteristic	1980	1981
Sex: % Female	66% (1500)	69% (1033)
Age: % Born Since 1940	67 (1497)	67 (981)
Education: % At least a Master's Degree	52 (1505)	54 (1005)
Status: % Tenured	85 (1489)	91 (1018)

Note: Figures in parentheses represent the number of cases on which percentages were calculated.

This paper reports on some preliminary findings from the 1981 survey. Schools with relatively high response rates will receive particular attention in the analysis of data.

Method

The two major dependent variables being studied are: (1) teacher acceptance of exclusive administrative control over performance evaluations, and (2) teacher preferences for colleague input into the evaluation process. Variable indicators were based on the following pertinent questions from the 1981 survey:

1. In our interviews (conducted in 1981) some teachers felt that the principal or department head should be responsible for classroom observations and evaluations. Other teachers wanted peers, parents or students to be included in the evaluation process. How do you feel about each of the following? (Respondents could answer: Strongly agree, agree with reservations, disagree with reservations, or strongly disagree.)
 - A. School administrators (e.g. principal or department head) should be solely responsible for classroom observations and evaluations.
 - B. Assuming that the individual(s) were acceptable to you, your colleague(s) teaching in the same subject area or at the same grade level should observe you while you teach and (when requested by you or by your principal) should submit a report (on his/her observations) to the principal and to you.
2. When a district is forced to make staff reductions due to Proposition 2½ or declining pupil enrollments, do you feel the following staff qualifications and experiences should be treated as essential, very important, somewhat important, or not important?

- A. Results of classroom evaluations by administrators.
 - B. Results of classroom evaluations by colleagues.
3. Would you (or do you) like to have another classroom teacher (a person acceptable to you) observe you while you teach and talk with you about the observation?
 4. Would you (or do you) like to observe other classroom teachers while they are teaching?

Questions three and four added a neutral "no opinion" or "would not object" response to the options "yes, I would like that" and "no, I would not."

I was unable to construct a multi-item measure of individual acceptance of administrative control. A major reason for this was the tendency of the data to be skewed in an approving direction. Specifically, 81% of our sample agreed (33% strongly so) that administrators should be solely responsible for classroom observations and evaluations. When the context of staff reduction is included, 26% thought such evaluations should be essential and an additional 40% endorsed them as very important. In fact only 6% felt they should have no importance.

These findings do not address the proposition that teacher acceptance of administrative control is contingent upon existing supervisory practices. As previously argued, principals or department heads who frequently and continuously talk with and observe teachers are likely to acquire stronger staff support than their withdrawn, uncommunicating counterparts. With this in mind, I constructed a school-level measure of staff acceptance of administrative control. The percentage of "strongly agree" to 1A, above, and "essential" to 2A was averaged for each school.

The resulting index was normally distributed with a mean of 37.97 and standard deviation of 14.64.

Our second dependent variable, preferences for colleague input into the evaluation process, proved less difficult to measure. Satisfactory distributions and relatively high intercorrelations (i.e., from .23 to .53) were obtained from four questions (i.e., 1B, 2B, 3 and 4). Principal component analysis was used to create a weighted additive index on which individual scores ranged from the lowest possible value of 1.78 to the highest, 5.23. With a mean of 3.57 and standard deviation of .81 the sample was slightly negatively skewed, indicating more than the expected favorability toward peer participation in classroom observations and evaluations.

I also computed mean scores for each school in the sample. The resulting 85 values were somewhat homogeneous ($\bar{X} = 3.55$, $S = .31$) but normally distributed. Although the process of aggregating data reduced the variance to be explained, it revealed important differences in school staff support for colleague input. We see in Table 2 that 20%, or 17 schools, were more than one standard deviation below and 16%, or 17 schools, were more than one standard deviation above the sample mean.

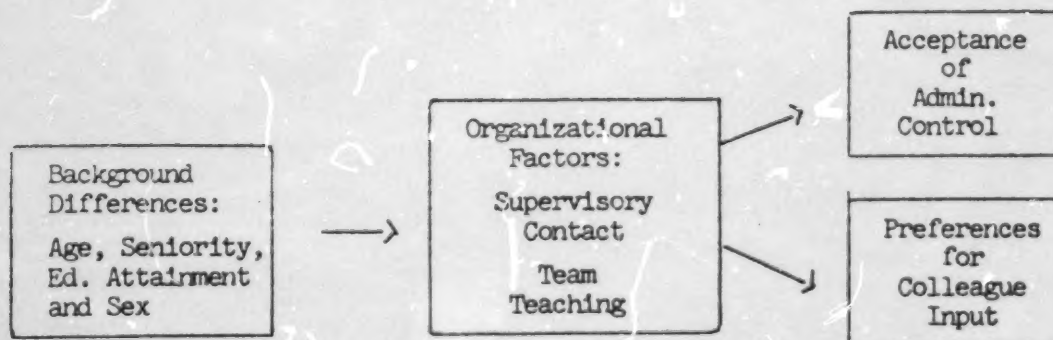
I have hypothesized that teacher acceptance of administrative control or their preferences for peer input are dependent upon organization factors and individual background differences. Figure 1 diagrams the specific relationships to be tested. Background variables (i.e., age, seniority, educational attainment and sex) are nearly self-explanatory at the individual level of analysis. Seniority is determined by number of years of uninterrupted service to the district and attainment by highest degree or

Table 2
Distribution of School
Means on Measure of Colleague Input
Into Evaluation Process

School Means ^a	Percentage	N.
0.00 - 2.92	4%	3
2.93 - 3.23	16	14
3.24 - 3.55	35	30
3.56 - 3.86	29	24
3.87 - 4.17	15	13
4.18 - 4.48	1	1
	100%	85

^aCutting points were determined from the mean and standard deviation of the 85 school distribution.

Figure 1



level of course work (i.e., associate's degree, college degree, some graduate study, master's, master's plus, CAS or CAGS, and Ph.D. or Ed.D.). At the school level I computed the percentages of respondents who were born after 1939, have ten years or more seniority, have at least a master's degree and are males.

Two intervening organizational factors are considered. First, an additive index of the frequency of supervisory-staff contact is based on the following:

1. During the last two months, how often has your principal or department head informally visited your classroom? (Choices ranged from "none" to "more than fifteen".)
2. How frequently, on the average, have you done the following:
 - A. Discuss classroom matters with your principal or department head?
 - B. Talk to the principal about school district policies? (Alternatives for A and B went from "never" to "several times each day".)

Principal component analysis produced nearly equal factor weights among these items. Consequently, the raw scores were first adjusted for number of viable response categories (i.e., five for Q. 1 and six for 2A and 2B) and then summed.

Second, the degree of classroom teaming is taken as an indicator of teacher collaboration. I asked teachers if they were members of a team and, if so, how often during a two month period they exchanged pupils, jointly taught the same lesson, and met for planning or evaluation sessions. For each item they could answer: never, once or twice, several times, nearly every day or daily.

Only 25% of our respondents are engaged in some form of teaming. At the same time these individuals are distributed among 52 schools, including 47 with some joint teaching. The relative rarity and dispersion of teaming in the sample led me to recode each form as a "dummy variable" indicating its presence or absence. Both individual values and school level percentages for exchanging pupils and joint teaching are considered in the data analysis.

District enrollment and staffing policies are potentially important contextual factors affecting the relationships found in Figure 1. During 1981-82 nine school districts faced significant staff reductions due to declining pupil numbers or Proposition 2½. Five of these considered teaching performance as one criteria in RIF decisions. The remaining four relied upon seniority, certification, and perhaps subject-area background. The so-called "control districts" held to relatively stable enrollments and, with one exception, experienced only isolated teacher layoffs.

I have hypothesized that teacher preferences are most sensitive to supervision and team teaching when performance evaluations are used in RIF decisions. To test this hypothesis respondents will be grouped by district context and an analysis of variance performed. Other variables in the model then will be introduced as covariates.

Figure 1 may be treated as a path diagram explicating causal relationships to be explored through multiple regression analysis. Of course independent variables should meet certain preconditions, e.g., normality and linearity, and correlate with either measure of teacher preferences. These preconditions do not preclude the use of dummy variables. However,

they limit the selection of specific measures. Such restrictions will be noted in the next section of the paper.

Wherever possible standardized regression coefficients, i.e. beta weights, are calculated for each independent variable in the proposed model. This is done separately for individual and school-level data. With respect to the latter, I include only schools with at least a 40% response rate ($N = 43$). As shown in Table 3, 65.1% of the subsample,

Table 3
School Sample and Subsample
by Educational Level

Educational Level	Subsample ^a	Total Sample
Elementary	65.1%	61.2%
Middle ^b	16.3	21.2
High School	18.6	17.6
	100%	100%

Note: Subsample $N = 43$ of a total $N = 85$.

^aSchools with at least a 40% response rate.

^bTwo districts had both a middle and junior high school.

compared to 61.2 of the overall sample, are elementary schools. The overrepresentation of elementary versus secondary units may have serious implications for the paper's findings.

Results

The results are presented in two sections. First, the causal model is applied to individual orientations. As we shall see, only age and seniority had a significant relationship with our dependent variables. Second, school-level analysis provides a more successful assessment of the hypothesized organizational influences.

Individual Orientations

I previously indicated the difficulty in creating a multi-item index of teacher acceptance of administrative control. However, each item can be recoded and crosstabulated with theoretically salient variables. Table 4 reports the results of this analysis for date of birth and district seniority. Not surprisingly older, more senior teachers, particularly those born before 1940, with seventeen plus years service, were more likely to endorse administrative responsibility for classroom observations and evaluation. At the same time, their younger colleagues were more likely to see such evaluations as essential to staff reduction decisions. The data support, however weakly, the proposition that junior staff members are less accepting of administrative control but are more willing to trust such authority if their jobs are at stake.

Other background variables (e.g. degree) as well as organizational factors (e.g. supervisory contact) did not show a measurable and consistent effect. Only grade level attained a significant chi square ($p < .01$)

Table 4
Acceptance of Administrative Control
by Date of Birth
and District Seniority

Survey Item	Date of Birth				Yrs of Seniority			
	1950 or Later	'40-'49	'30-'39	1929 or Earlier	0-5	6-10	11-16	17 or More
1. Admin. Responsibility for Observations and Evaluations ^a	33.3% (104)	35.5% (217)	45.2% (440)	50.0% (212)	28.7% (202)	37.3% (316)	38.1% (383)	56.2% (137)
	$\chi^2 = 14.75^*$, eta = .11				$\chi^2 = 27.70^{**}$, eta = .13			
2. Results of Admin. Classroom Evaluations in RIF ^b	40.2 (102)	39.5 (211)	34.1 (428)	29.4 (204)	38.8 (196)	36.9 (301)	37.8 (373)	31.8 (132)
	$\chi^2 = 30.41^{**}$, eta = .14				$\chi^2 = 15.78^*$, eta = .09			

Note: Figures in parentheses represent the number of cases on which percentages were calculated.

*p < .05, **p < .01 based on 6 degrees of freedom.

^aPercent strongly agree with "disagree" categories collapsed.

^bPercent essential with "not important" and "somewhat important" categories collapsed.

and accounted for one percent of the variance in item one. Elementary school teachers were most accepting of administrative control over evaluations (i.e., 40.5% strongly agreeing).

Turning to the desirability of colleague participation in the evaluation process, age and seniority are significantly ($p < .01$) and inversely correlated ($r = -.16$ and $-.21$ respectively) with teacher preferences. Consistent with the earlier finding older, more established staff members seemed to reject peer input.

When I examined the relative impact of organizational factors the results proved disappointing. Contrary to our theoretical assumptions greater visibility through teaming, however defined, produced regression coefficients of less than .10. Similarly, the frequency of principal or department head contact gave a Pearson r of only .04.

The district context of enrollment and staffing had a very modest but uninterpretable effect. An analysis of variance ($F = 5.607$, $p < .01$) revealed that teachers facing possible reductions partially based on performance were only slightly more favorable ($\bar{X} = 3.59$) toward peer input than their seniority-backed counterparts ($\bar{X} = 3.44$). But this finding fades when compared to the even higher average ($\bar{X} = 3.65$) of the mixed control group. Furthermore the explained variance was only .01.

School-level Analysis

Organizational factors are the most important determinants of school-wide support for administrative control. Recall that the percentage of "strongly agree" and "essential" responses to the two salient items was averaged for each school. When these values are put into separate regression equations with measures of contact with supervisors and

joint teaching, the results found in Table 5 are striking.

Frequent contact of an administrator with staff appears to solidify ($\beta = .30$) their support of administrative control over evaluations and staff reductions. Joint teaching, however, had just the opposite effect ($\beta = -.27$). More importantly, these organizational factors continue to be important when staff compositional variables are taken into account. As reported in Table 5, the addition of the most explanatory compositional factors, percent male and percent with at least 10 years of seniority, added to the power of the model.

Probing further into the hypothesized relationships, I found that percent male was inversely related ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$) to contact with supervisors. This implies that school staffs populated by males are likely to have less overall supervision. Grade level may be a confounding factor because elementary schools usually have a much larger female component than high schools.

Other variables in the model did not significantly ($p < .10$) add to our understanding of differences in school supervision. Turning to the second major dependent variable, average support for peer input into the evaluation process, the causal model was suggestive but less convincing. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6.

School staffs with some teaming did show greater favoritism toward colleague participation. However, this independent variable is overshadowed by the compositional variables. Increasing the proportion of males seemed to improve the level of staff dispositions toward peer involvement. Other measurable correlates were percent with a master's degree ($r = .24$) and percent with at least 10 years seniority ($r = -.16$). However

Table 5

Effects of School Organization and Selected
Background Variables on Support
for Administrative Control

Independent Variable(s)	Beta	R ²
Supervisory Contact ^a	.30**	.09
% Joint Teaching ^b	-.27*	.07
% 10 yrs ⁺ Seniority and Supervisory Contact	.17 .33**	.12
% Male and % 10 yrs ⁺ Seniority and Supervisory Contact	.21 .27 .46***	.17

Note: N = 43, *p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .01.

^aSchool means coded as units of standard deviation from the 43 school mean ($\bar{X}$ = 1.50, S = .26). The new values ($\bar{X}$ = 2.47, S = .94) correct for some skewness in the sample. If the raw scores had been used, the values for beta, above, would have been larger.

^bDichotomized at the median (i.e., 4.76%) and recoded as a dummy variable. Respondents from 18 of the 43 schools did not report any joint teaching.

Table 6

Effects of Selected Independent Variables
on Support for Peer Input
into the Evaluation Process

Independent Variable	Beta	R ²
% Team Teaching	.14	.02
% Team Teaching	.23	
% Male	.33*	.12

Note: N = 43, *p < .01.

these variables did not reach a satisfactory level of significance (p < .10) when entered into a multiple regression equation.

Discussion

I have explored two possible responses of teachers to staff reductions. The findings suggest that teachers are generally accepting of administrative authority over performance assessments. The alternative, colleague involvement in the evaluation process was also viewed favorably, but not at the expense of administrative control. The proposed causal model is a vehicle for disentangling potentially important causes of teacher orientations.

Acceptance of administrative evaluations appears to be contingent upon a principal or department head's visibility. Specifically, administrators who regularly visit classrooms and discuss work-related questions

and issues received more acceptance of their evaluative role than their relatively isolated counterparts. Accessibility and visibility, rather than intrusion, seem to be the key concepts at the school level.

Teachers seem to be seeking genuine feedback from another professional. If isolated from colleagues, their supervisor can serve that function. If they belong to a team then the findings suggest, rather inconclusively, that peer input is desirable. Of course such interpretations are qualified by the important influence of age and seniority.

Older teachers are much more willing to accept a hierarchical structure of authority. They seem more protective toward their jobs. At least they place less emphasis on administrative evaluations being used in RIF decisions. The results by seniority reinforce the image of an older established staff holding onto their positions.

Perhaps the issue is not so much age or years of service, but respect for the quality of performance assessments. The work of more experienced teachers may be invisible to other adults. For this reason they are less enthusiastic about peer input. This interpretation does go beyond the present paper. However, two other findings do lean in that direction.

First, joint teaching represents an opportunity to have other professionals observe one's teaching. Under such circumstances teachers show signs of acceptance of peer judgments and less acceptance of administrative evaluations. Further study on this point is planned.

Second, the measure of peer input has two revealing items. Although only 33% of the respondents said colleague evaluations should be very important or essential (compared to 66% for administrative evaluations)

in RIF decisions 54% would agree to peer observation of, and report on, their teaching. In short, the legitimacy of such evaluations is called into question unless others actually see one at work.

Seniority remains a strong factor but so does administrator visibility and accessibility. On that point it's interesting that percent male in a school is the major variable ($r = -.44$) influencing supervisory contact. There are at least two possible interpretations. While men acknowledge administrative authority, they are less receptive to, or seeking of contact with supervisors. Alternatively, principals or department heads are less intrusive of male autonomy. Neither interpretation is satisfactory by itself. Furthermore, grade level and sex of the administrator are confounding factors.

There are obvious shortcomings to the research. The sample of districts may not be heterogeneous enough, especially given the effects of Proposition 2½, to differentiate our results. At least the analysis failed to find a significant, interpretable effect from district context. Further analysis of the present data, together with a longitudinal approach to the later 1982 wave, should provide a more comprehensive understanding of teacher views toward the evaluative roles of administrators and teachers during a period of extensive layoffs.

Notes

¹I first divided elementary schools into (a) traditional and (b) alternative organizational forms. If possible, two of each type were then selected. In one high school two "houses" rather than departments were the participants.

²These were regular classroom teachers (including music, art, and physical education) employed on a full-time basis (with the exception of kindergarten) at one of the 89 schools. All teachers in two small high schools (located in stable systems) were surveyed.

³Means, standard deviations, factor weights and number of cases are listed below:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>	<u>Factor Weights</u>	<u>N</u>
1B	2.40	.97	.97	1024
2B	2.10	.96	.96	986
3	3.08	.64	.64	1035
4	2.53	.70	.69	1036

Questions 1B and 2B range from one to four, Q. 3 from two to four, and Q. 4 from one to three.

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